



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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RL:0437

HR 520  
REQUESTING A COST-BENEFIT STUDY OF  
VENTILATION RETROFITTING FOR CERTAIN STATE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Statement for  
House Committees on  
Energy, Ecology, and Environmental Protection  
Public Employment and Government Operations  
Public Hearing - 10 April 1981

By  
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HR 520 recognizes the need for energy conservation measures and requests that a cost-benefit study of ventilation retrofitting for certain state buildings and facilities. The Environmental Center statement on HR 520 does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

While we are in general agreement with the intent of this resolution, we do have specific comments related to the manner in which the proposed cost-benefit studies would be conducted. It would appear more appropriate and efficient to have one state agency responsible for developing a cost-benefit model applicable to all state buildings and facilities. Such a model would employ constant fuel cost figures and discount rates and thereby result in comparable cost-benefit ratios. This is the type of aggregate data the state would need before it makes a decision to begin a ventilation retrofitting program.

The cost of having individual agencies conduct cost-benefit studies of building under their jurisdiction would probably be much higher than a centralized effort. A more serious problem of a fragmented study, such as the one proposed in HR 520, would be inconsistent state-wide results due to conflicting data incorporated in the models employed.

With regard to a program of ventilation retrofitting, we urge that the state recognize the considerations which must be made for adequate fire protection measures in buildings designs. A likely constraint in developing a natural ventilation system is the building design standard requiring 1-hour fire walls between passage ways and rooms. All of the cost-benefit studies should be conducted within existing building design restrictions to ensure that their conclusions are realistic.